

Local News

THE NEWSLETTER OF AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, LOCAL 2199

February 3, 1986

IT'S A MEETING!

On February 13, at 4 pm in the Stevenson Conference Room, all members of the local AFT and all interested faculty and librarians are invited to a rare and significant event: a meeting of union members and friends.

On the agenda: the latest (and finally good) news about the collective bargaining (see next page) and the ratification election of the proposed constitution for the statewide organization, as well as the election of a steering committee for our campus group.

If good news and good company are not enough to entice you to a meeting, be aware that good food, as always, will be served.

IT'S (SHE'S) AN ORGANIZER!

Jane Yett, whom many of you know from her six years as a lecturer in the writing program and for environmental studies, has agreed to serve as membership organizer for the coming months. If you are not a member and are a likely candidate (you know who you are), Jane will be contacting you to invite you to join.

As you no doubt already know, a growing membership makes clear to the University that your union representatives have your support at the collective bargaining table. Membership dues also fund the collective bargaining, as well as various legal actions the union takes on your behalf, in addition to the day-to-day functioning of the union.

Please welcome Jane when you see her, and consider signing on the dotted line.

CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION

If you are an AFT member, you will soon receive a ballot and a copy of a proposed revision of the current constitution of the University Council-American Federation of Teachers, the umbrella organization to which our local belongs.

This revision is not the inconsequential document you may be used to, replacing "whereas" with "heretofore," and so on. In fact, it addresses the central questions of what the union is and how it ought to function.

Central to the proposed changes is the dissolution of the individual campus locals, and the statewide election of officers, who would serve for unlimited two year terms.

The national AFT has told us that once the locals are dissolved, they will not be chartered again: thus, this is an irrevocable step. The locals would be replaced by chapters, with somewhat reduced powers and responsibilities; the UC-AFT, now a federation of locals, would be chartered as the local.

Currently, officers are elected by delegates to the UC-AFT, who have votes proportional to the number of members on

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STEERING COMMITTEE ELECTION

Unlike other campus locals, which has the traditional array of officers, the Santa Cruz local has historically had at its center a steering committee (our constitution calls it a representative committee). The steering committee is supposed to have seven members, who may choose traditional titles (president, vice-president, etc.) if they

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CONSTITUTION, continued

their campus. Under the new proposal, the membership would elect officers, bypassing the delegates. There would still be delegates with proportional voting rights on the University Council, but they would vote only on other matters.

Other changes, such as the addition of collective bargaining representatives to the executive board of the UC-AFT, and the establishment of a ratification procedure for collective bargaining contracts, are proposed as well.

Copies of the proposed constitution will be available at the February 13 meeting, as will statements from various delegates articulating a range of positions on the proposal.

Revisions to the constitutions must be ratified by a 2/3 majority of campuses: that is, six campuses (not delegates) must approve these changes for them to be effected. If the constitutional revisions are not ratified, the UC-AFT will continue to function under the old constitution until an alternative constitution is proposed and ratified.

Mail ballots will go out February 18, and must be returned by March 4. Secret ballot procedures will be observed: you will receive two envelopes in which to return the ballot; one you will sign, which those counting the ballots will check against membership lists, and one blank one for your ballot. The blank envelopes will be separated from the signed ones before counting. You must be a member by February 15 in order to vote.

We hope that the intricacies of these procedures will persuade you of the seriousness of this issue, even if the questions themselves do not! The revisions to the constitution will be discussed at the February 13 meeting; please feel free to contact Roz Spafford or Paco Ramirez if you have questions meanwhile.

STEERING COMMITTEE, continued

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In local meetings last year, we decided that the steering committee which would most fully represent all Santa Cruz academics would contain members from the various groups the local includes: one or two librarians; one researcher; a tenured faculty member and a lecturer SOE; several non-senate faculty members from various boards and programs, and perhaps a graduate student.

Our constitution provides for nominations to be collected in April, with a mail ballot following. However, since it has been some time since we have had an election, and since we need to have a mail ballot anyway to accomodate the constitutional revision, it seems it would not violate the spirit of the constitution to have an election now. And matters statewide make it imperative that our steering committee be elected by secret ballot as the constitution provides.

Nominations for steering committee members will be heard at the February 13 meeting. Please call in nominations to Roz Spafford or Paco Ramirez if you cannot attend.

Nominees must be AFT members (or be ready to join forthwith), and should be willing to coordinate the work of the local, a task which, handled correctly, should follow the model of Tom Sawyer and the fence: that is, delegating rather than doing.

Although our constitution provides that the steering committee shall decide among its members who shall be the delegate to the UC-AFT, the California Federation of Teachers, and the national AFT, the UC-AFT's constitution requires that the delegate(s) be elected by secret ballot of the membership.

Balloting for the steering committee and the UC-AFT delegate(s) will occur by mail, in the same mailing as the constitutional ratification election. Only local members may vote (again, the February 15 deadline applies); please return your ballot as soon as possible after you receive it.

Again, feel free to call Paco (426-0135) or Roz (425-7493) with questions.